



September 2, 2011

BY EMAIL AND DELIVERED

Executive Committee, City of Toronto
c/o City Clerk's Office
City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Executive Committee Members,

Re: Proposals regarding Toronto Port Lands plans

As you consider proposals to assume planning and development control for the Toronto Port Lands, we are writing on behalf of the thousands of civic leaders involved in CivicAction to strongly urge you to not make any irrevocable changes to existing plans without first undertaking a rigorous process of public consultation. The proposed changes to be discussed at your next meeting are very significant, are not well understood and were not the subject of any substantive debate or discussion in the last municipal election campaign.

The Toronto waterfront is a unique jewel shared by City residents and has been a focal point of CivicAction's agenda since we were first created as the Toronto City Summit Alliance. Our 2003 report, *Enough Talk: An Action Plan for the Toronto Region*, noted that "Toronto's waterfront has the potential to rival that of any other city in the world." We called on the three orders of government to give the waterfront agency a clear mandate together with funding sufficient to create "a successful waterfront – one that will attract residents, as well as tourists", beginning with remediating and servicing the Port Lands and constructing new public parks and open spaces, to provide the foundation for development to proceed, while demonstrating real progress and building momentum behind waterfront revitalization.

At our 2007 Summit, there was optimism that in 2005 the City of Toronto and the provincial and federal governments had agreed on how the \$1.5 billion Waterfront Toronto budget would be invested and notice was taken of the significant planning progress that had been made. Since that time, plans for the Lower Don Lands have been finalized (and have received international awards), and there has been a steady stream of new parks and exciting developments appearing along the shore.

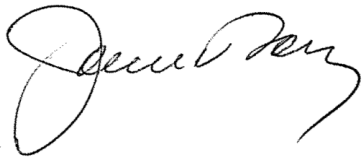
2007 Summit participants focused on how to make the waterfront plans a success, highlighting the need to create a vibrant living and working community that would attract employers and Toronto residents. They said that "(t)he waterfront must be designed first to be a destination for GTA residents, not to be a major tourist attraction", noting the need to link the waterfront to existing tourist attractions and arts-related developments, including the CN Tower, the CNE, Ontario Place,

the Brickworks, and the Distillery District. They also considered the role of private sector funding to help expedite waterfront revitalization, suggesting opportunities such as endowment funding and corporate sponsorship related to specific aspects such as transportation and safety.

In these challenging economic times, it is sensible to assess how City assets can be leveraged to alleviate financial pressures. It is also sensible to assess whether or not there are ways to expedite the renewal of the Toronto Waterfront including the Port Lands without compromising the high standards established over time by our governments, following extensive public consultation. Again, we would respectfully suggest this should be done in an open, considered way. In the case of the Port Lands in particular, such an assessment must fully consider and respect the tremendous time and financial investments that the City and other orders of government have already made to collaboratively advance the 25-year waterfront plan, and the public support this work has earned over eight years of intense public consultation and innovative design.

Reviewing what we are doing and how we are doing it can never be seen to be a bad thing in and of itself, whether it has to do with the Toronto Waterfront or anything else. We are simply advocating in this instance for a review which is transparent, thorough and prudent in light of the unique nature of the waterfront. We only have one and we are extremely fortunate to have it. The decisions we make today will have an impact for generations to come. Let's make them the right way, whatever they are.

Sincerely,



John Tory
Chair



Julia Deans
CEO

Copies to: Members of Toronto City Council
 Members of CivicAction Board and Steering Committees
 Members of Toronto City Hall Press Gallery